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INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000457

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL MARR MCAP MOPS NATO IZ

SUBJECT: NAC UPDATED ON THE NATO TRAINING MISSION-IRAQ

Classified By: D/PolAd A. "Hoot" Baez. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C/NF) SUMMARY: NATO Assistant Secretary General for Operations Martin Howard briefed Allies at the October 14 meeting of the North Atlantic Council on the results of his October 10-11 visit to Baghdad. He said that he was struck by how positively NATO was viewed by Iraqi officials. He reported that he had helped inaugurate the new Headquarters for the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) in a ceremony that also marked five years of NATO's role in Iraq. He said that he had visited the carabinieri training for the Iraqi National Police, noting that Kurdish policemen were being put through the training for the first time. At the same time, he said that the current phase of carabinieri training would end in February 2010 and would be replaced by a smaller, high-level mentoring program. He drew attention to the offer by one Ally (Spain) to provide training for Iraqi border security forces. He also noted that NATO would bolster its training of Iraqi Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers. Howard said that Iraqi Minister of Defense Abdul Qader had requested certain types of technical assistance for the Iraqi military and that a joint committee might be set up to determine whether NATO could provide any of the requested assistance. Howard said that Iraqi officials supported the deepening of the NATO-Iraq relationship through the NATO-Iraq Structured Cooperation Framework, but did not have specific ideas on how to move this forward. Howard urged Allies to begin thinking through how to eventually migrate the NATO-Iraq relationship from NTM-I to a more mature partnership similar to that which other countries in the region enjoy. Howard said that Allies would begin discussing the NTM-I Periodic Mission Review immediately following NATO's October 22-23 Defense Ministerial, with a goal of having it reach the Council by mid-November. Noting the important role NTM-I had played in helping to build up the Iraqi security forces, Ambassador Daalder welcomed the Spanish offer to train border security forces. The Italian PermRep also stressed the importance of NATO's role in Iraq.
END SUMMARY

GOI Views NATO Positively

12. (C/REL NATO) At the October 14 meeting of the North Atlantic Council, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Operations Martin Howard briefed Allies on his October 10-11 visit to Baghdad. He said that he had called on the Ministers of Defense and Interior, the Chief of the Border Police, the Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Police training academy, and on the new Commander of NTM-I General Barbero.

He also met with a number of NATO Heads of Mission. Martin said that he was struck by how positively NATO was viewed by all parts of the Iraq government. He said that all his interlocutors said they believed that the NATO mission had made a major impact and could continue to do so.

Five Years of NTM-I: New HQ and Carabinieri Training

13. (C/REL NATO) Howard said that he and Iraqi Minister of Defense Abdul Qader had publicly inaugurated the new NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) Headquarters in a ceremony marking five years of cooperation between NATO and Iraq. Howard said that he and Abdul Qader also gave a brief press conference. (Note: NTM-I's fifth anniversary was celebrated in Baghdad on August 4.)

14. (C/REL NATO) Howard said that he had also visited the Italian-led carabinieri training course at Camp Dublin, reporting that for the first time a number of Kurdish policemen were being trained as a part of this national program. At the same time, he noted that the current level of carabinieri training for the Iraqi National Police would conclude in February 2010, to be followed by a smaller carabinieri-led program of high-level mentoring of what will become an Iraqi-led continuing training program.

Moving Forward: Border Security and NCO Training

15. (C/REL NATO) Howard said that he had discussed the offer
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by one Ally of assistance, under NTM-I, to assist in building up the Iraqi border security forces. Noting that this had been a long standing and top priority gap in the training provided by NATO, Howard said that this offer had been strongly welcomed by the Iraqi authorities, particularly the Minister of Interior. He also said that an assessment mission from the Ally concerned would soon be visiting Iraq. Spain confirmed that it was looking into how its Guardia Civil could provide this training.

16. (C/REL NATO) Howard also said that NTM-I was looking at further bolstering its officer and NCO training for the Iraqi armed forces. (Note: According to information on the NTM-I website, the NATO staff to support NCO training at Camp Taji will increase in number with 3 NCO augmentees supporting the next course which begins on November 1. Thereafter, a permanent team of one officer and 7 NCOs will support the training. The NTM-I website also reported that 51 Senior Non-Commissioned Officers from all areas of the Iraqi Army and two from the Iraqi Air Force graduated on September 17 from the third Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Course at Camp Taji. According to the website, this is a 45-day course designed as a prerequisite for promotion to Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (E7-E9). The NTM-I website also reported on the August graduation of 27 students from the NTM-I supported National Defense College. These students, including two Brigadier Generals, completed a one-year course of study and earned a Masters' Degree in National Security Studies.)

Abdul Qader Looks for Technical Assistance

17. (C/REL NATO) Howard said that the Minister of Defense had also raised a number of technical areas where he was looking for assistance for the Army, Air Force, and Navy. He said that Abdul Qader recognized that NTM-I would not necessarily deliver in all these areas, but suggested that a committee be formed comprising MoD, MoI, and NTM-I representatives to look closely at Iraq's training needs and make proposals on which -- if any -- would be appropriate for NTM-I to take on. Howard said that he thought this was a sensible proposal and that he had encouraged the Commander of NTM-I to follow up.

Structured Cooperation Framework

18. (C/REL NATO) Howard said that the GOI officials he met with had indicated strong support for NATO's longer term relationship with Iraq under the Bucharest-endorsed Structured Cooperation Framework. At the same time, they made no specific proposals on how to take this forward. Howard said that he also had the sense that there were differences within the Iraqi government over where responsibility for this program should lie. Howard said that Allies needed to think through how to identify a sensible and seamless migration path from the mission-oriented, in-country nature of NTM-I to a longer-term relationship closer to that enjoyed between NATO and other countries in the region.

Next Steps

19. (C/REL NATO) Howard said that his immediate next step was to incorporate the outcome of the visit into the delayed NTM-I Periodic Mission Review (PMR) and to seek Council endorsement of the PMR to allow NTM-I to continue through 2010 and potentially beyond. He noted that the Long Term Agreement with Iraq on NTM-I runs until the end of 2011. He said he hoped to bring the PMR to the NAC in the first half of November, adding that the Policy Coordination Group would begin working on it immediately after the October 22-23 Defense Ministerial in Bratislava. He said that once Council approved the PMR, the NTM-I budget for 2010 would be unfrozen.

Allied Response

110. (C/REL NATO) Ambassador Daalder was joined by his Italian counterpart in praising the important work of NTM-I. Daalder welcomed the Spanish initiative for border security force

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training. Italy also stressed the importance of developing a deeper NATO-Iraq partnership. The Netherlands said it was important that the PMR be approved as quickly as possible because some Allies would need to take certain national decisions about their participation before the end of the year.

DAALDER